



West Surrey Partnership

April 2026
Newsletter



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WSP Operations Group

The spring term has been rich in shared learning: from refining our robot-racing skills and exploring what gender discussions look like in Westminster, to hearing from an author about the process of writing a new novel and discovering the sounds of orchestral instruments. These experiences have brought children from across our schools together, with the added joy of seeing new conversations form as they get to know one another and find common ground.

Alongside this, we have been pleased to offer an increasing number of opportunities for staff to work and learn together, and we will continue to build on this. If there are subject areas you would like us to focus on, please do get in touch. Our summer term focus will be junior school music provision and senior school PSHE, particularly in light of the upcoming changes.

My sincere thanks to the schools who so generously hosted us, the speakers who joined us, and the partners who worked alongside us to create such a rich programme of events this spring term.

VEX IQ Robotics Competition

In January, 120 Year 6 students from 10 primary schools attended the VEX IQ Robotics Competition. This scheme gives pupils the opportunity to design, code, and build their own robots, developing key skills in teamwork, problem solving, coding, and iterative design. The competition day was the culmination of all their previous hard work and planning, and it was great to see each team of pupils working together to score points in matches against other schools.

As well as the robotics competition, pupils were also given the chance to take part in a STEM poster competition, judged by Proactive, a local prosthetics company. This year's theme focused on designing a robot to support elderly people living independently at home.

The event was a great success, thoroughly enjoyed by students and staff alike, and we are already looking forward to next year's competition!



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LBBA Afternoon Tea

We were delighted to be able to host Afternoon Tea for around 100 children from seven schools, all of whom are taking part in our Literally Brilliant Book Awards.

Everyone who came had the chance to meet other readers from different schools and to discuss the books over some delicious scones and brownies. It was wonderful to hear which books everybody liked the most, and to hear what everyone thought about the characters and the writing styles in each book.

We were also lucky enough to meet author Fidan Meikle over Zoom, who told us all about how she wrote 'My Name is Samim', as well as answering some of our questions about the book. It was so interesting to hear about her writing process and about what inspired the book, and we hope everyone will come away inspired to read and write.

We are hugely grateful to Fidan for giving up her time, and thank you to the catering team for the fabulous treats! We hope to see even more of you at our awards ceremony in June...!

Politics Forum

We welcomed Sixth Form students from six different schools to a Politics Forum in February. Politics students were given the chance to hear from two expert speakers - Professor Sarah Childs, who has held the chair of Politics and Gender at the University of Edinburgh since 2022, and Dr Simon Curtis, a Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Surrey. Topics discussed included the growing power of China and the interactions between gender and Westminster, and students were given the chance to ask questions and speak about these issues. It was a truly thought-provoking evening - thank you to our visiting speakers.

EDI Networking Event

We were pleased to welcome 11 EDI leads across 8 schools to an EDI Networking Event in February. It was a pleasure to be able to discuss various EDI-related topics with a group of like-minded people, and it was truly insightful to get an idea of how different schools encourage diversity and inclusion. It was also a great opportunity to plan some cross-school EDI events for the future.

We have all come away with many new ideas about how we can support our students, and we hope that the group will be able to meet again.

Staff Decision-Making Workshop

Our Decision-Making workshop, facilitated by Salt and Light Coaching, was an insightful and energising professional development experience. The day focused on how we make decisions under pressure, an area that resonates strongly with the daily realities faced by teachers and school leaders.

Through a combination of guided reflection and practical activities, delegates explored how we justify our decisions, quantify the information available to us, and process that information effectively to arrive at sound, confident conclusions. One of the most valuable aspects of the session was the opportunity to step back from the pace of school life and think more deliberately about our cognitive habits. The workshop encouraged honest reflection on both our strengths and the blind spots that can emerge when we are managing competing priorities. A huge thank you to Salt and Light Coaching for facilitating an excellent session.

Careers Networking Evening

On Wednesday 4th March, pupils from local schools were invited to a Careers in Creative, Performing Arts, Design and Sport Networking evening.

There were a huge number of experienced and insightful speakers: The Performing Arts Careers lineup included an experienced actor, a writer/comedian, and a film/TV director and playwright who imparted excellent advice to those interested in pursuing a career making or starring in theatre, television or film. The Design Careers speakers included an interior architect and an urban designer, and the Sports Career room included a physiotherapist and a sports psychologist.

Many thanks to the parents and alumni for their wisdom.



SEND Conference

We were delighted to be able to invite our schools to 'Beyond the Label: Intentional Inclusion', an adaptive teaching conference for educational professionals supporting pupils with special educational needs in the classroom. This event brought together experts, practitioners, and academic research to explore what truly inclusive practice looks like, and delegates had the chance to hear from a wide range of specialist speakers including Professor Sarah-Jayne Blakemore and Professor Joni Holmes. We are very grateful to the wonderful speakers for giving such insightful seminars and workshops about how we can all work to strengthen inclusion across our schools.



Philosophy Talk

We were pleased to invite Dr Natalie Banner, Director of Ethics at Genomics England, to speak to many of our philosophy, medical and RE students about ethics, health data and public engagement. It was a hugely interesting session, involving discussions about how to keep patient data safe and about the potential role of AI in genomics, and it was so valuable to hear about Dr Banner's career path and the non-linear road to her current position. A huge thank you to Dr Banner for her insight and her time.

US University Admissions Event

Students attended a talk from leading education consultants Crimson Education on Thursday 12th February, which gave a clear, behind-the-scenes introduction to the US university admissions process.

Chloe Godsell, Crimson Education's Partnership Manager, explained how admissions decisions are made and gave top tips about the application process and about how to start building your application from Year 9. Many thanks to Crimson Education for this very informative talk.

Emma Johnson Music Foundation Performances

Last month we were delighted to welcome musicians from the Emma Johnson Music Foundation to perform for a number of primary schools in the West Surrey Partnership.

Emma and her band told stories about four different instruments - the clarinet, the trombone, the violin and the double bass - and children had the chance to get to know each instrument as well as take part in some fun musical games.

A huge thank you to the Emma Johnson Music Foundation for giving our children the chance to see live music up close. We very much hope that every child who saw a performance will be inspired to learn an instrument!



